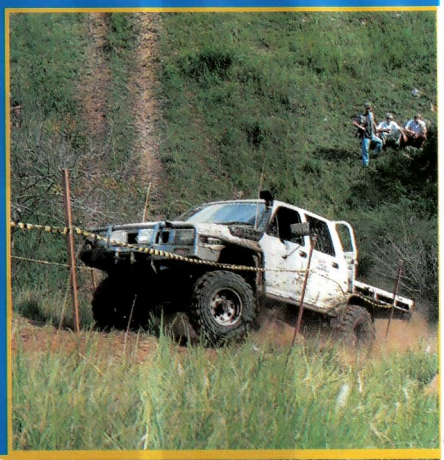
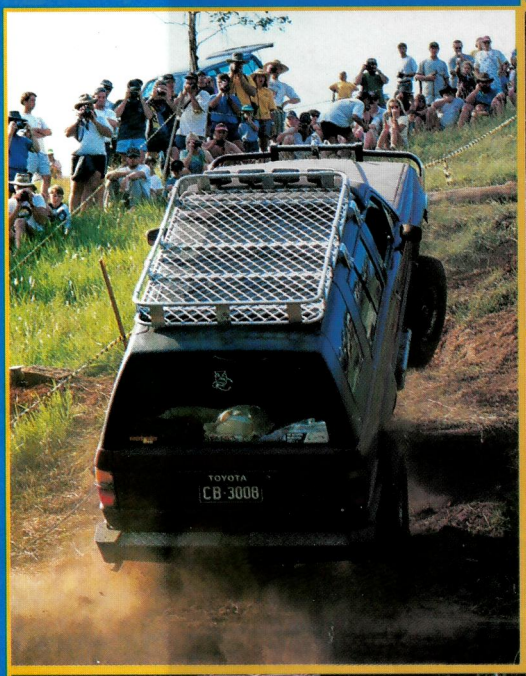
Best Ever 4WD Jamboree



BY PATRICK CALLINAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RIC WILLIAMS, RIC WILLIAMS JNR, & PAT CALLINAN.

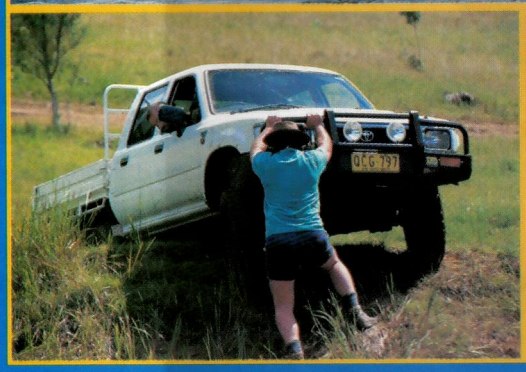
THE ANNUAL 4WD JAMBOREE HELD AT STUNNING MT SEAVIEW HAS BEEN HAILED AS THE BEST JAMBOREE YET.

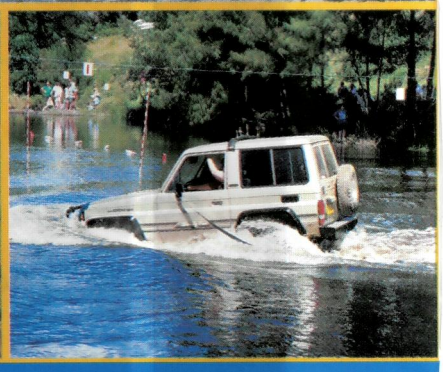


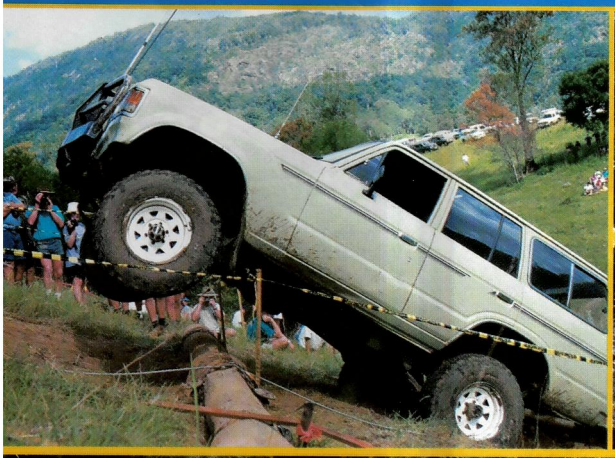
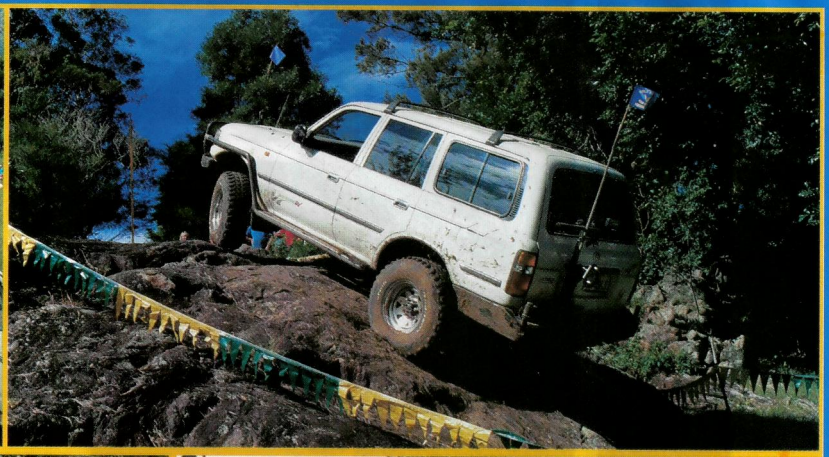
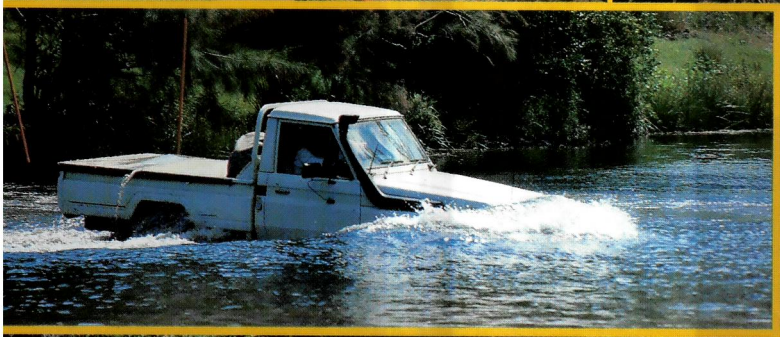
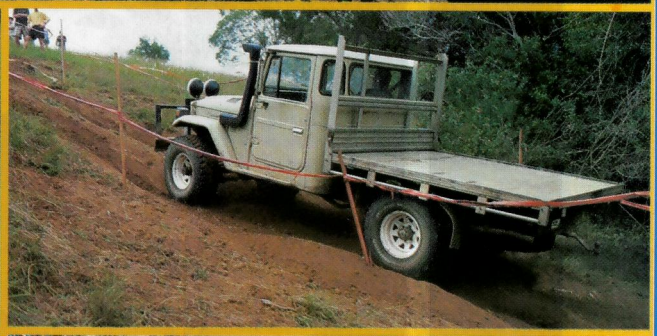
In picture perfect conditions, offroaders jostled their way through the five challenging events in a constant quest for supremacy. Luckily, the weather held out for most of the event, save for a little downpour late in the Mission Improbable event and during the presentations. Many competitors will remember with a smile the flood of 1989 that had most of the crowd stranded for close on ten days inside the banks of an angry Hastings River. There was no such threat this year, as blue skies smiled on the competition. Over 500 cars, carrying near to 2500 people made their way to the mountain this year, with the emphasis being on fun rather than winning. Close to 30 clubs were represented at the Jamboree, with the noisiest club award going to the Suzuki Club hands down!

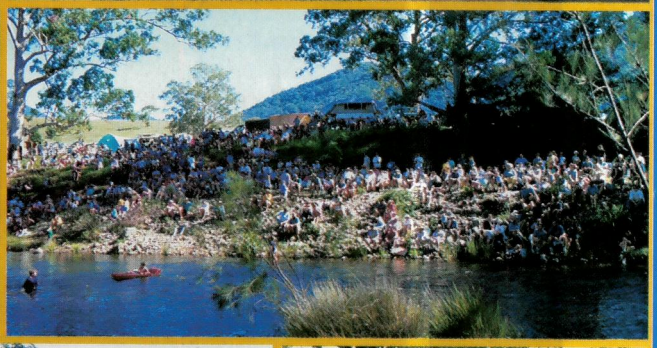
The first event was the hill climb, aptly named 'Heartbreak Hill'. The event was broken up into Open Diff and Locked Diff sections, with the locked diff section complete with heavy logs proving tough on many vehicles.

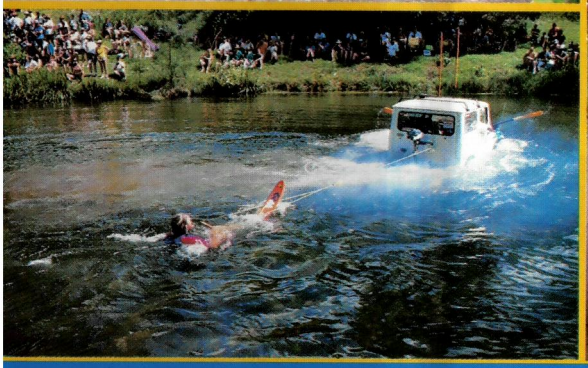
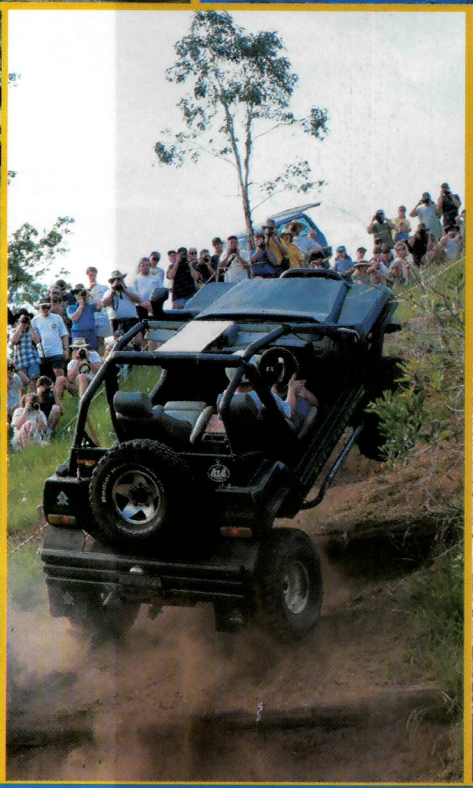
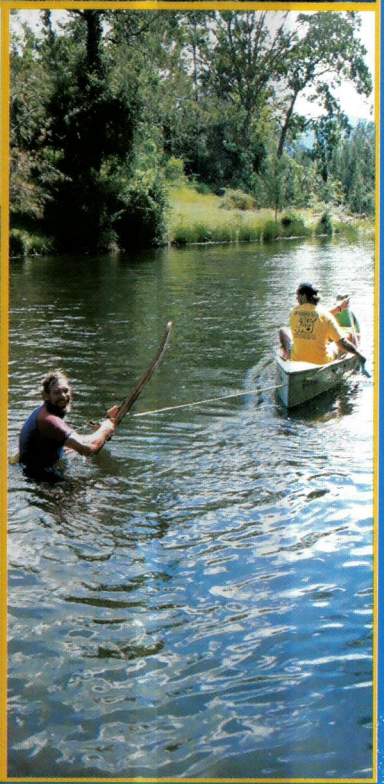
Bogger Adams was one of the first to try and conquer the hill in his tricked up Suzuki Sierra. The hill, however, got







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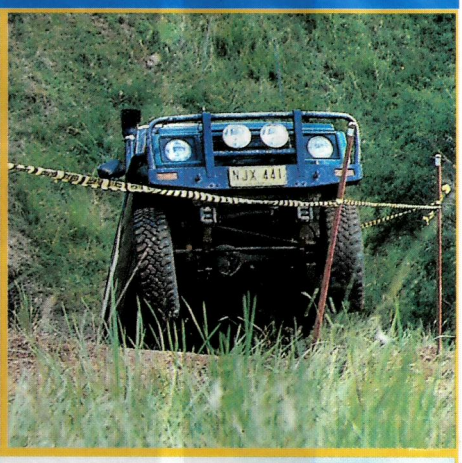
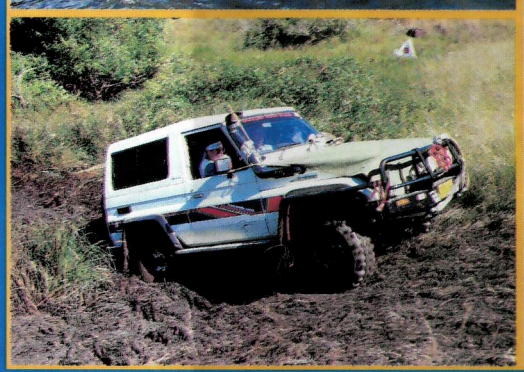
the better of his little truck, flipping it head over tail and then back onto its wheels! In the spirit of the Jamboree, Bogger straightened out his bull bar, had some new lights fitted to his bonnet, and proceeded to compete in the rest of the events!

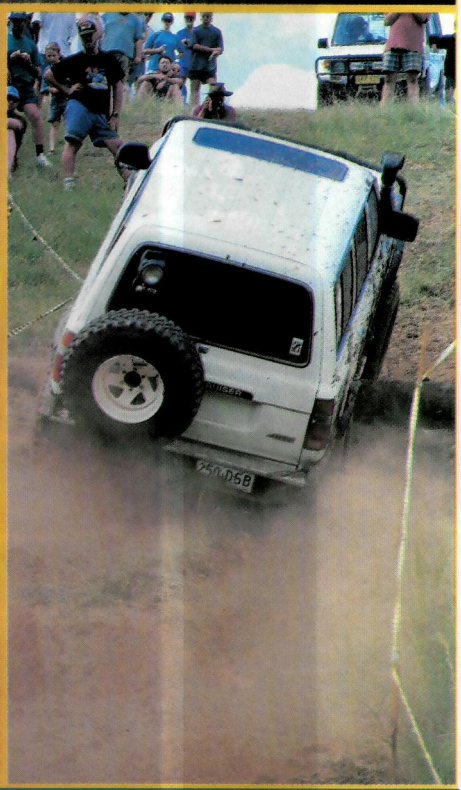
The difficulty for most drivers on Heartbreak Hill was staying within the markers, particularly in the locked diff section. While making it most of the way, they would hit the final log and the front would rear up and off the track, striking the markers. The 80 Series Landcruisers had a high success rate on this hill, with no shortage of low down grunt propelling them up the hill. Mick Whitehead in his brand new but muddy Wrangler made it easily to the last log, only to have his foot slip off the accelerator (or so he says!) and the car stall. Club Chub, complete with "HAVOK" number plates also made it to the top, but like many before him was disqualified after hitting the markers. The eventual winner of Heartbreak Hill in the locked diff section was Phil Hammond, who had a faultless drive in his silver LandCruiser. He was followed by Shane Rose in second and Ray Walker who took out third place.

In the exciting open diff section it appeared you either had to have a very big, or very little 4WD, with the most success coming from Suzukis, Patrols and Landcruisers. An outstanding drive by the popular Celia Barry saw her make it to the top in her white Vitara, only to be disqualified after hitting a few markers on the way. Jennifer Murphy was another lady to have a go at this section, but like her husband failed to drag the Vitara up the hill. John Boswell, like many Suzuki drivers made it up the open diff section with ease. However, after a superbly smooth drive, the honours went to Dave Robinson. Second place was taken by Shane Rose and third by Ray Walker.

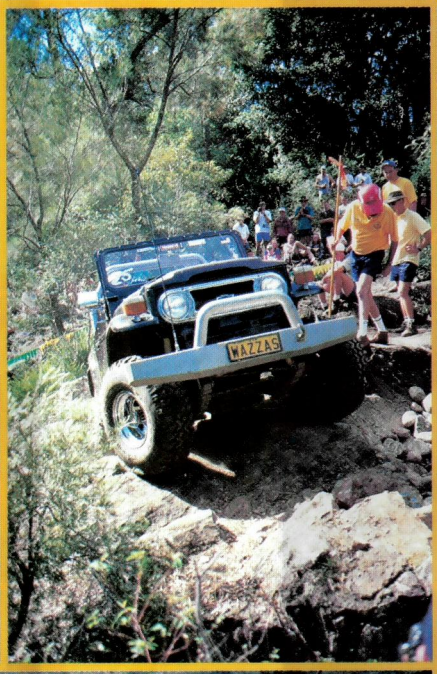
The next event was the "River Rampage". Basically a slalom course through the Hastings River;



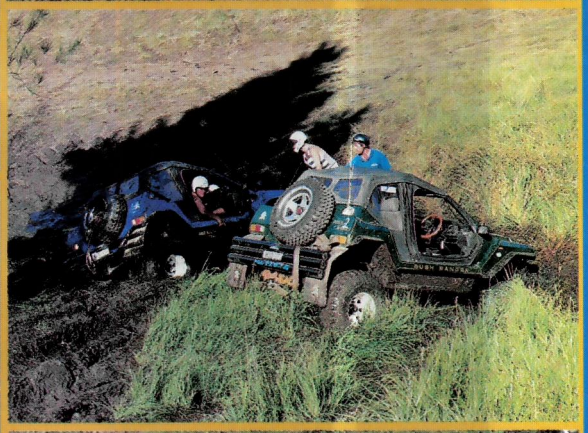


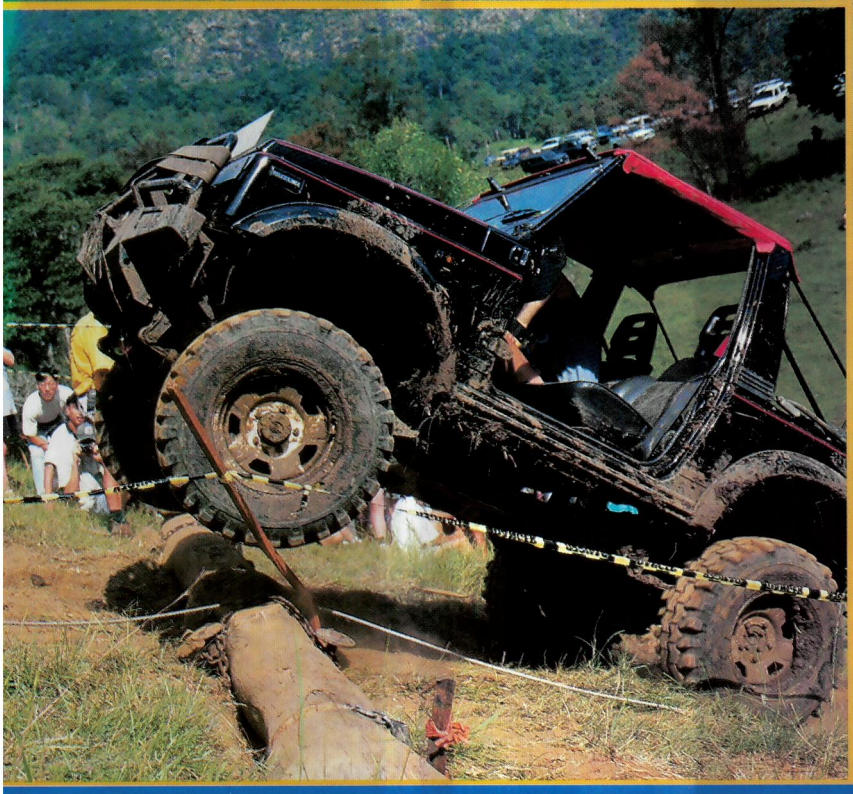


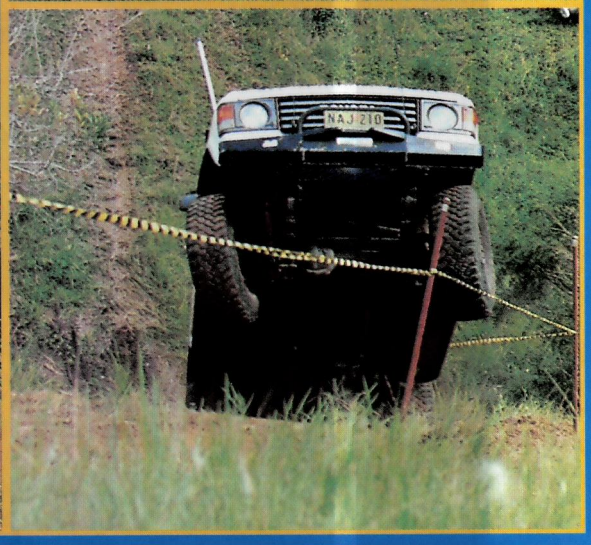
SUZUKI
DW-696


WAZZAS

NB-437






NAJ 210

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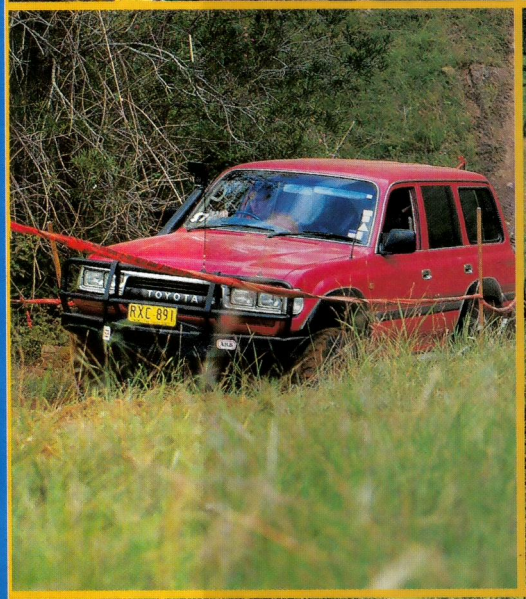
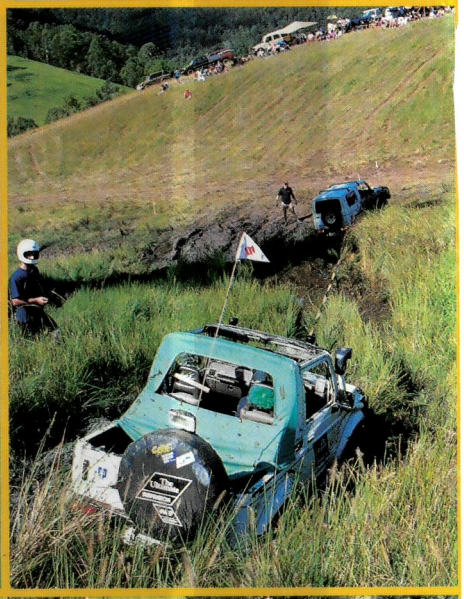
this event was a real crowd pleaser. Competitors had to be sure they picked the right line through the course, or risk being hung up on some big submerged rocks. One competitor in his Landcruiser clearly took the wrong line and was stuck in the middle of the river for around 15 minutes, before official Rudi Prummel helped him out of his bind. Also on hand for a laugh was the Mt Seaview canoe recovery crew, who tried without success to winch the Cruiser out via their bow mounted winch! One Suzuki in the River Rampage actually had a running outboard engine mounted on the back to try and help it through the water. They had difficulties though with the extra weight of water skier Rudi who was being towed behind, wetsuit and all!! It was this lighthearted entertainment and fun that really made the '97 Jamboree, and put grins from ear to ear on the whole crowd.

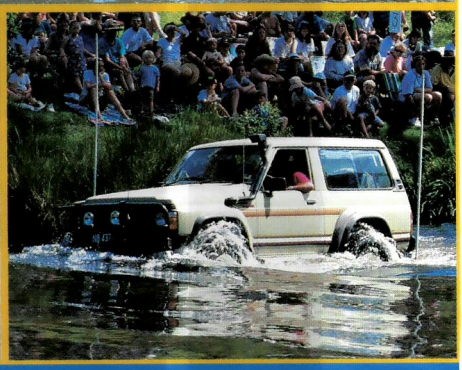
With skilful manoeuvring Robert Aikin drove his vehicle to victory in the River Rampage. He was followed by Robert Turner and then Paul Blackburn.

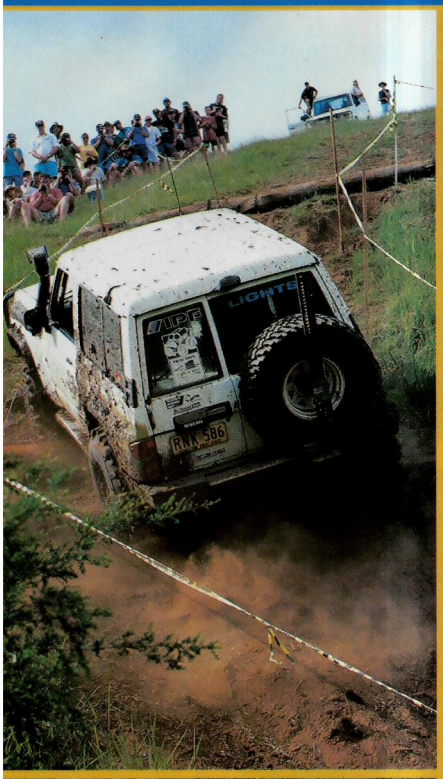
Scheduled for 8pm Saturday night was a new event, never before seen in Jamboree history. The crowd were on the edge of their seats, keenly awaiting the new Jamboree jaunt. Named 'Mission Improbable', this event looked just that - improbable. Drivers had to manoeuvre their 4WD's up a hill climb, then into the river, before going around a tricky slalom course, and then back out of the river - all in pitch black. Entrants were keen to test themselves and their vehicles around this new course, but some were disappointed, as entries were restricted to 20 due to logistics.

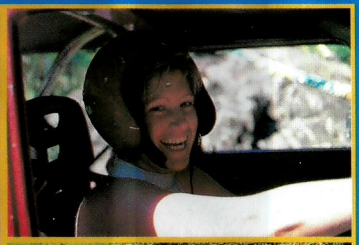
The event started with a bang; a brilliant display of fire works signalling the start of competition. The first few competitors had great difficulty on the hill climb, eventually surrendering the bonus points to travel the river course. The first successful vehicle around the whole course was a John Davis driven Bushrangie. Soon after, the crowd

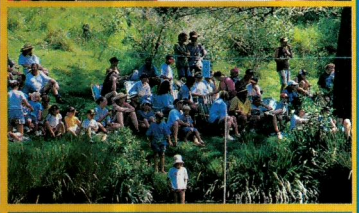


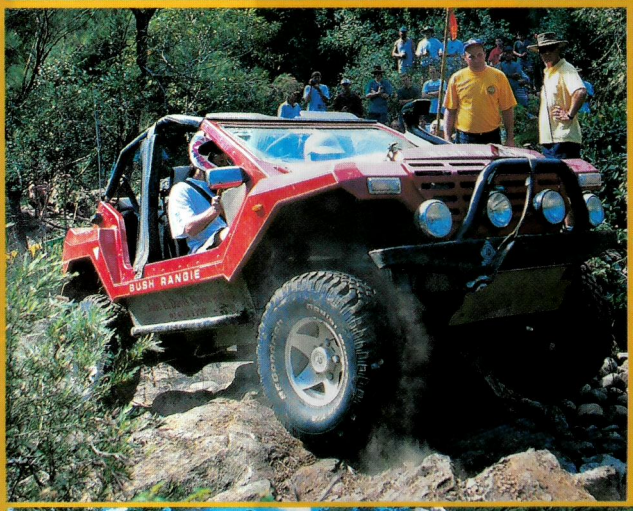


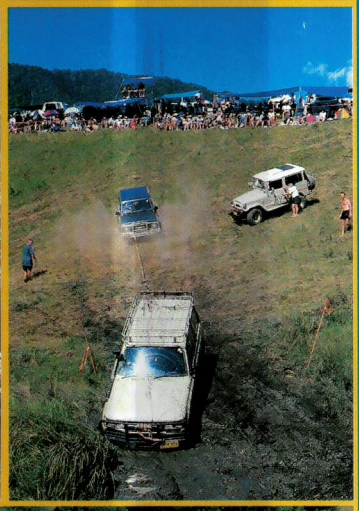



LIGHTS
RNA 586

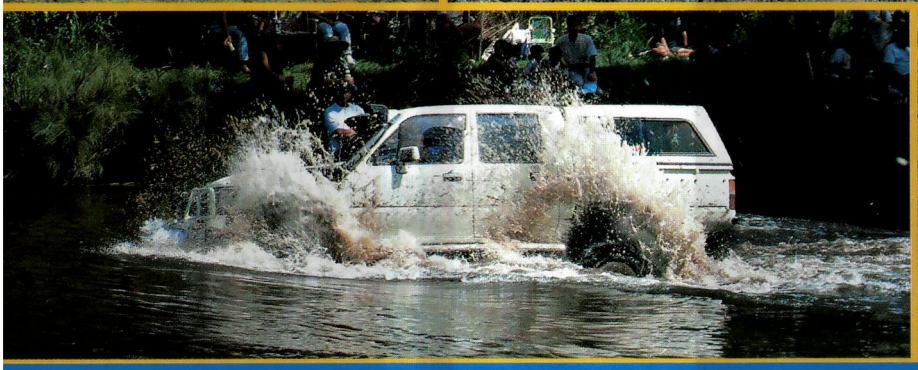





BUSH RANGIE



HAVOK



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were shocked when a competing dual cab Hilux, while traversing the river all of a sudden sprouted fireworks from its rear! Spectacular stuff!

Apart from the fireworks, this event is reminiscent of the night river crossings in the TransPen and Borneo Safaris. The major difference being that most Jamboree vehicles in this event lacked roof lights, making it really tough to see once the headlights became submerged. Drivers and crowd alike revelled in the excitement of the new event, with spectators constantly egging on the drivers. Rain started coming down soon after the start, but this didn't stop the eager crowd from staying to watch. The winner of this tough event was Mitch Andrews, followed closely by John Mannix in an 80 Series and then Glen Marshman in his white Maverick.

The first event on the card on Sunday was the Rocky Horror. This consisted of a short but tight course around a particularly rocky area near the river. While being suited better to short wheel based vehicles, some of the bigger vehicles still managed to register reasonable times. Bruce Davis, in his blue Bushrangie managed to unluckily put a hole in his front diff, causing oil to pour from the crack. He had to be towed to the finish by his team mate . One well set up green Series 3 Landrover drove the course beautifully without stops, taking the right lines through the whole course. This team were headed for a record time, had it not been for the Ford Maverick partner, who had difficulties getting over the final rocky obstacle. The final results were as follows:

Open Diff-

1st. Peter Haasman/Mark Bonello
2nd. Darren Kiely/Paul Jordan
3rd. Michael Hill/Chris King

Locked Diff-

1st. Matt Owens/John Curtis
2nd. Marcus Donsworth/ Rodney Manning
3rd. David Wrbik/Simon Hedges

The final event on the cards was

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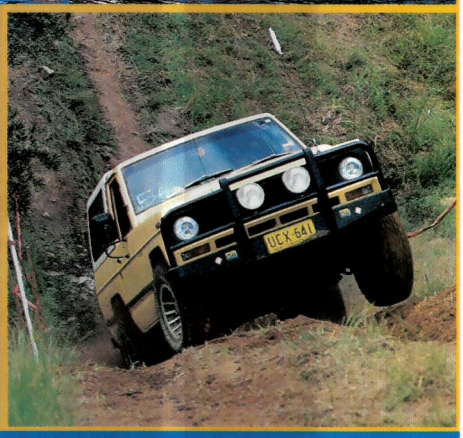
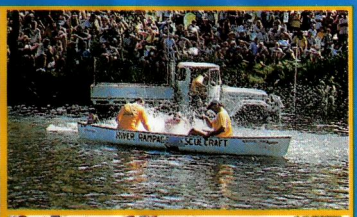
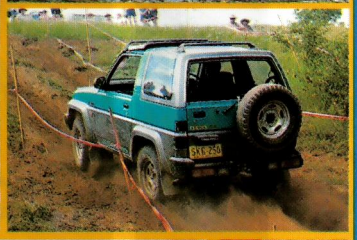
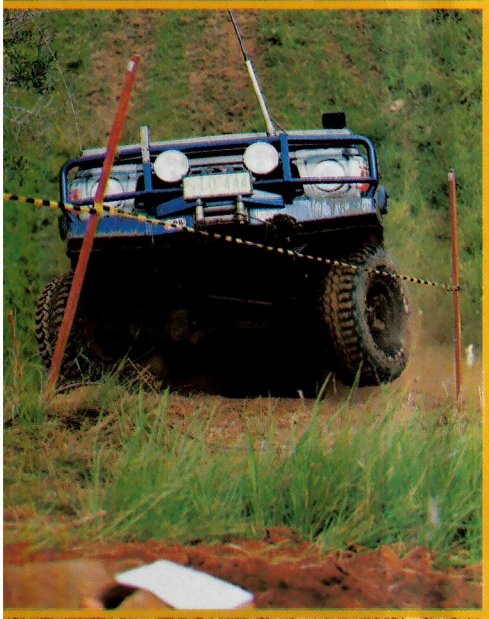
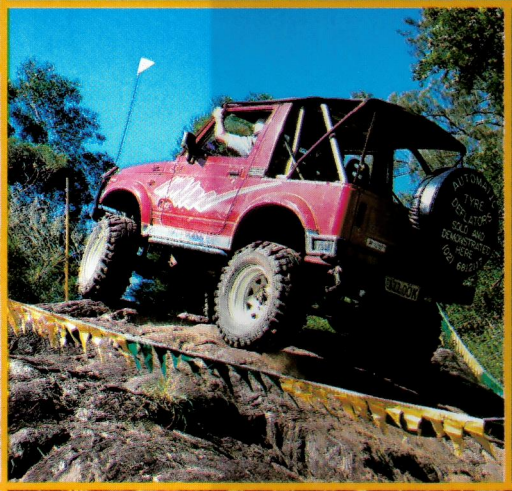


4X4MAD


RIVER RAMPAGE
SCULCRAFT







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Continued from P.42

the oh-so-popular 'Mud Lark'. In teams of three cars, drivers had to get all three vehicles twice across the bog hole, taking a different route on the way back. The course had to be completed in five minutes. This event was clearly dominated by the light Suzukis, who appeared to just glide over the top of the mud, while the big cars dug in and sank. In a comedy of errors, the Bushrangie team had two cars stuck in the bog. With the diesel on one bank trying to snatch the others out, until he too succumbed to the depths of the bog hole, sliding back in on the rebound. The bogged team could only laugh, in a true indication of the fun-loving spirit of the event. With all three vehicles in the bog, the caterpillar had to go to work and drag them out.

After a while, it appeared the bog hole had won; the first ten cars failing to traverse both parts of the mighty mud crossing. It took the pioneering brains of the Swamper All Sorts to conquer the course. After crossing to one side, the teams got out of their cars, with one driver walking the course. He found the driest section of the course, and led his team across the bog to dry land. They were the first team to cross. The only problem was, with other teams looking on, they too now knew the secret to the course. After the Swamper All Sorts crossed, the success rate became much higher, with the eventual results being as follows:

1st Place
Darren Taliana
Mark Bonello
Greg Page

2nd Place
Matt Nolte
Mark Christopherson
Dave Robinson

3rd Place
Les Davey
John Curtis
Matt Owens

The 1997 4WD Jamboree was indeed the most successful on record. Thanks must go to the organisers- the Newcastle Land Rover Owners Club. Headed by Barry Little, this group of volunteers did an admirable job, running the whole event with clockwork efficiency. Club members worked through tireless hours of preparation in the months preceding the event, giving up holidays and spare time. Without this kind of effort, the event simply would not have functioned. The Jamboree is now getting a little too big for the club, however, so they have opted to pass on the reigns to another organiser. Whether this comes in the form of another club or a private company, who knows. All we know is that it will take a lot to top the Jamboree of '97.

A special thanks go to Fred Black and his staff from Out of Town 4WD, and Long Ranger fuel tanks for their effort and support to help make the Jamboree a memorable event.

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